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Senate

The Senate met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable MICHAEL F. BENNET, a Senator from the State of Colorado.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Almighty God, the architect and sustainer of our destinies, You are the source and center of our highest joy. Bring into this Chamber a unity that will destroy cynicism, criticism, and complacency.

Lord, we need this unity to maintain a government worthy of those who have sacrificed so much for freedom. As the American people view today's deliberations, may they sense a fresh civility and respect that are truly exemplary. Let Your kingdom come. Let Your will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable MICHAEL F. BENNET led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. INOUE).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, April 4, 2011.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable MICHAEL F. BENNET, a Senator from the State of Colorado, to perform the duties of the Chair.

DANIEL K. INOUE,
President pro tempore.

Mr. BENNET thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, there will be a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each. Following morning business, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the nomination of Jimmie Reyna to be U.S. circuit judge. We will vote on that at 5:30 this afternoon.

Additionally, we were able to reach an agreement to vote in relation to H.R. 4, the 1099 repeal. This is not going to be part of the small business jobs bill we have before us. We have spun that out so it can go right to the House. We have spent enough time on the 1099. Senators should expect two rollcall votes on 1099, on Tuesday, prior to the caucus meetings.

I have spoken to the Republican leader, and we think we may have a pathway cleared to finish the small business jobs bill, but we will see how that turns out. We will work on that today and in the morning and certainly at our caucuses tomorrow afternoon.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 706 AND H.R. 471

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am told there are two bills at the desk due for a second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the titles of the bills for the second time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 706) to stimulate the economy, produce domestic energy, and create jobs at no cost to the taxpayers, and without borrowing money from foreign governments for which our children and grandchildren will be responsible, and for other purposes.

A bill (H.R. 471) to reauthorize the DC opportunity scholarship program, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I object to any further proceedings with respect to these bills en bloc.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard. The bills will be placed on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV.

BUDGET NEGOTIATIONS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the time we have left to work on a budget agreement is extremely short. The window in which we can avoid the terrible consequences of a shutdown is closing quickly. It is no longer measured in months or weeks. We are now down to just a few days in this deadline. The time we have to get the long legislative process started in both Houses is measured in hours.

It is clear those sitting at the negotiating table have different priorities. That is true of any negotiation. We all should share the same goal: to keep the country running and to keep the momentum of our economic recovery moving forward. We all want to cut the deficit.

Last week, we agreed upon a number on which to base our budget—\$73 billion below the President's proposal. But disagreements remain on where we should make those cuts. We worked

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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